

Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #5

This report examines regional perceptions of transportation related issues from the 2018 Life In Hampton Roads survey (LIHR 2018) conducted by the Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center. Data from prior years is also provided when available to show comparisons in responses over time. Responses were weighted by city population, race, age, gender, and phone usage (cell versus land-line) to be representative of the Hampton Roads region. For additional information on survey methodology, and analyses of other issues, please see the SSRC website at www.odu.edu/ssrc.

Transportation

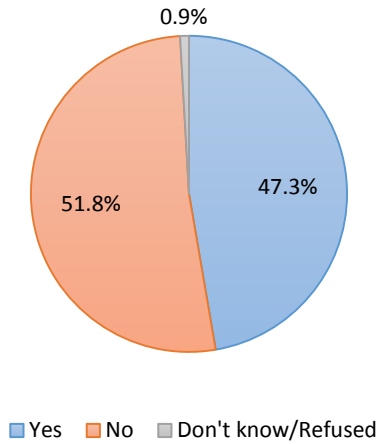
Every day, people traverse the eleven bridges and five tunnels in the Hampton Roads area, commuting for work, family, and other activities. The 2018 Life in Hampton Roads survey asked residents of the Hampton Roads area about their opinions on bridge and tunnel tolls and views on alternative transportation.

Hampton Roads residents report fairly consistent numbers in average commute times to work or school, hovering between 18 and 24 minutes. In 2014 the average commute times was around 24 minutes and then decreased to an average commute time of 20 minutes in 2015. In 2016, this average decreased even further to 18.1 minutes, the lowest reported commute time of the survey. In 2017, the reported commute time to school or work was 19.2 minutes, a slight increase over the previous year and that number increased again slightly this year to an average commute time of 21.5 minutes.

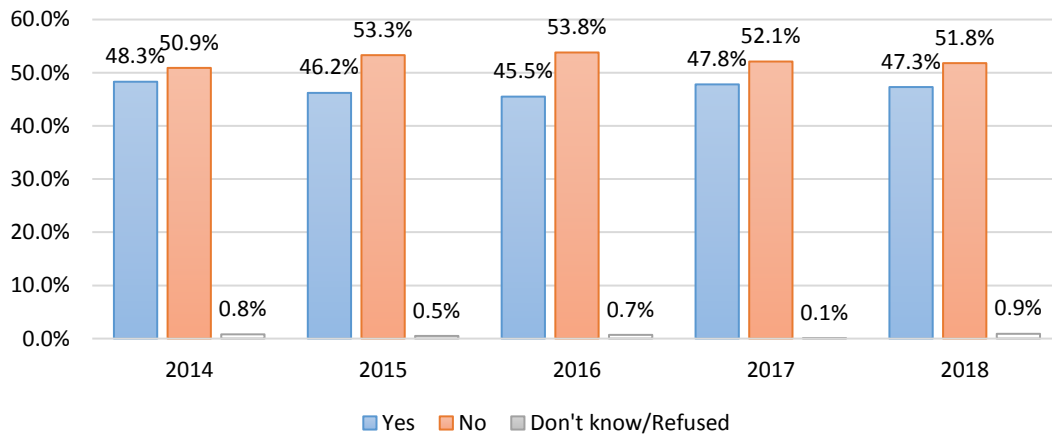
Traffic Congestion

The Life in Hampton Roads survey asked residents within the past month, did they avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion. Less than half of respondents (47.3%) said that they did avoid visiting neighboring cities due to congestion, while 51.8 percent did not. These percentages are fairly consistent with previous years' data.

Within the past month, did you avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion?

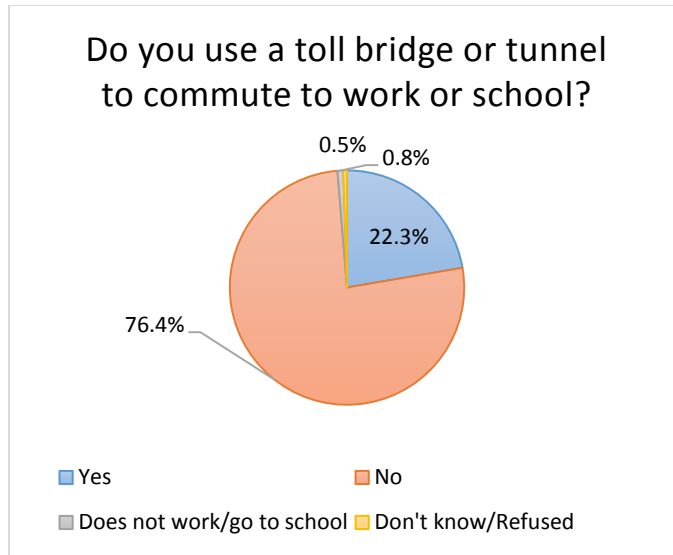


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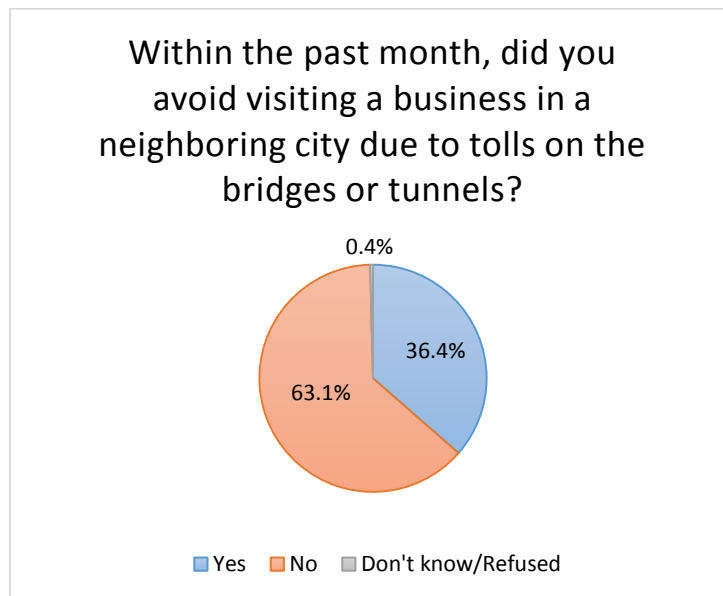


Tolls Bridge & Tunnels

Wanting to get a sense of the role that bridges and tunnels play in Hampton Roads everyday life, we asked survey respondents if they used a toll bridge or tunnel to commute to work or school. Interestingly, more than three fourths (76.4%) of respondents said that they do not use a toll bridge or tunnel to commute to work or school.

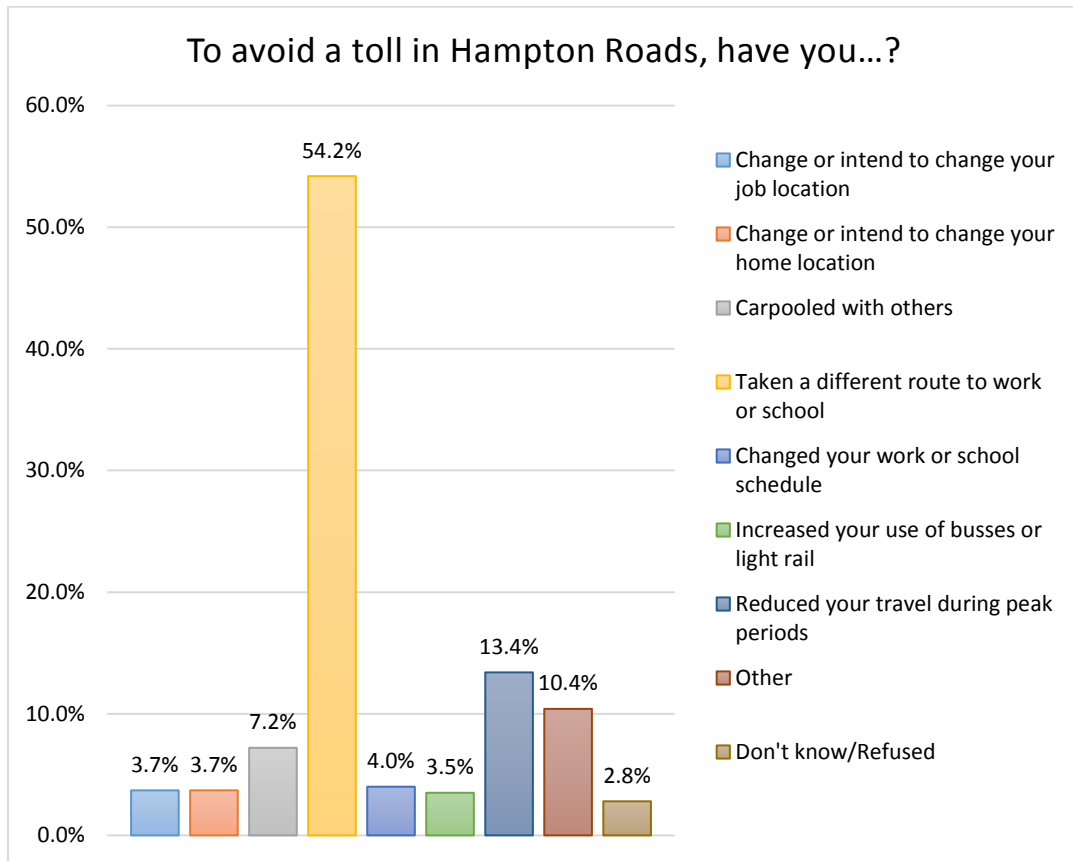


We subsequently asked within the past month, if respondents avoided visiting a business in a neighboring city due to tolls on the bridges or tunnels. Over 63 percent of respondents stated that they did not avoid business due to the tolls, while 36.4 percent of respondents said they do avoid business because tolls on bridges and tunnels.

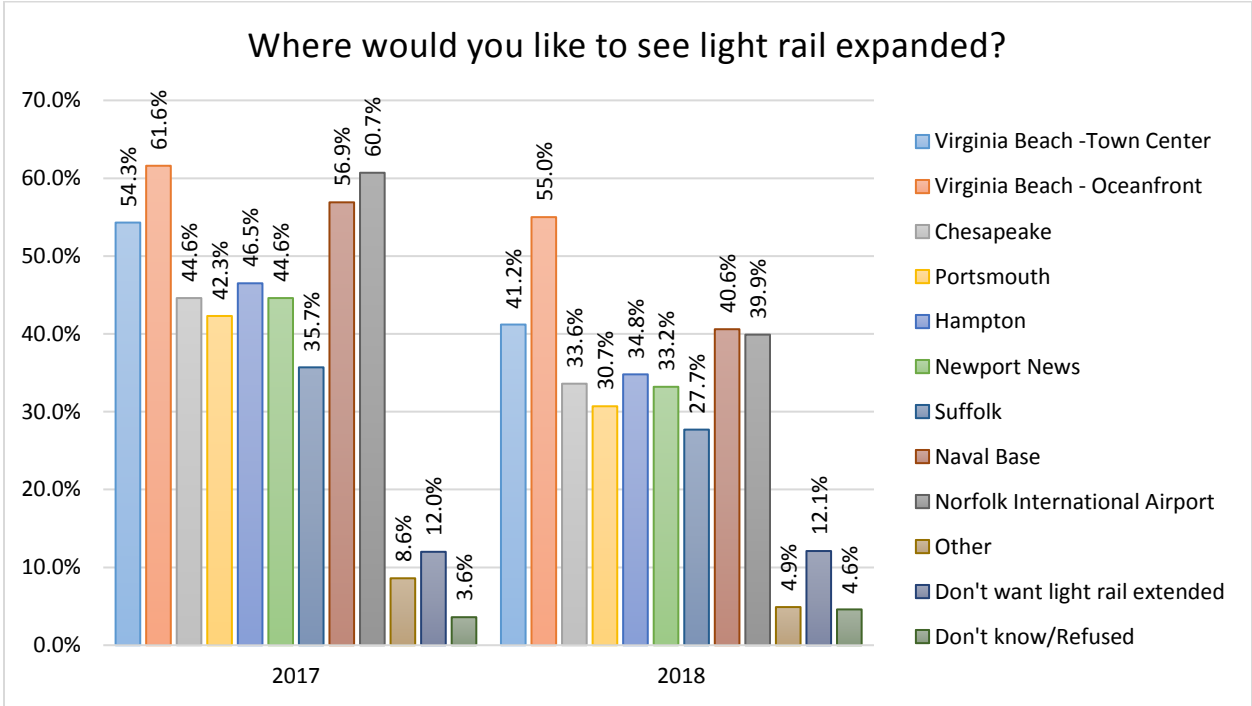
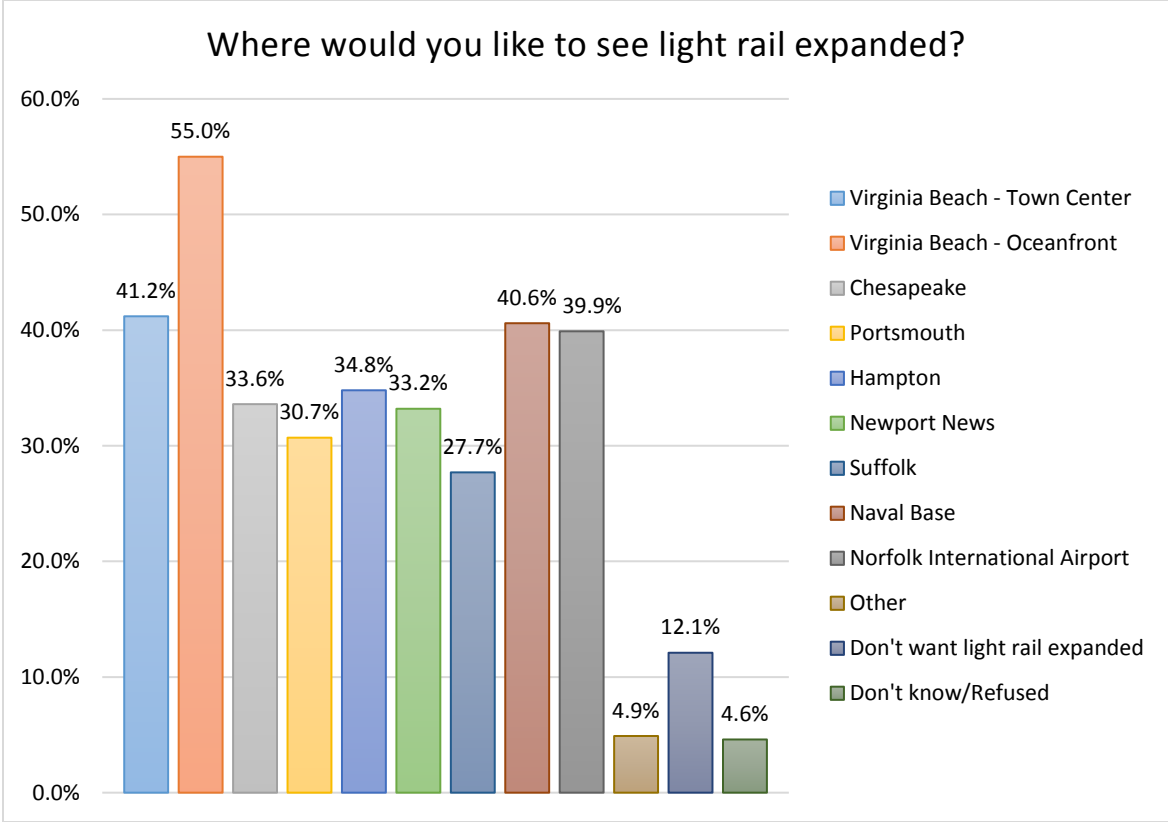


The survey respondents were asked about what actions they have taken, if any, to avoid tolls in Hampton Roads. Almost half (48.3%) of respondents stated that they do not intentionally avoid the tolls.

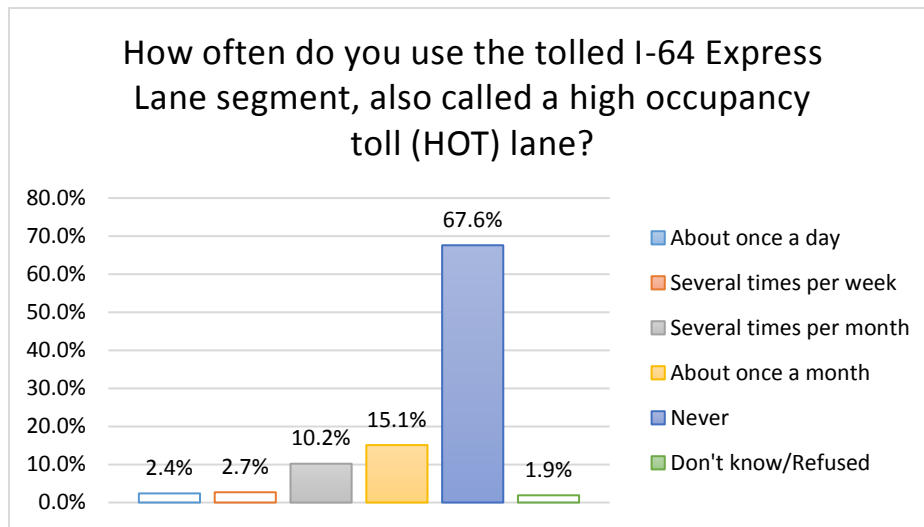
Of those who said they do avoid the tolls, the most common response (54.2%) was that respondents took a different route to school or work. Another 13.4 percent of respondents said they reduced their travel during peak periods.



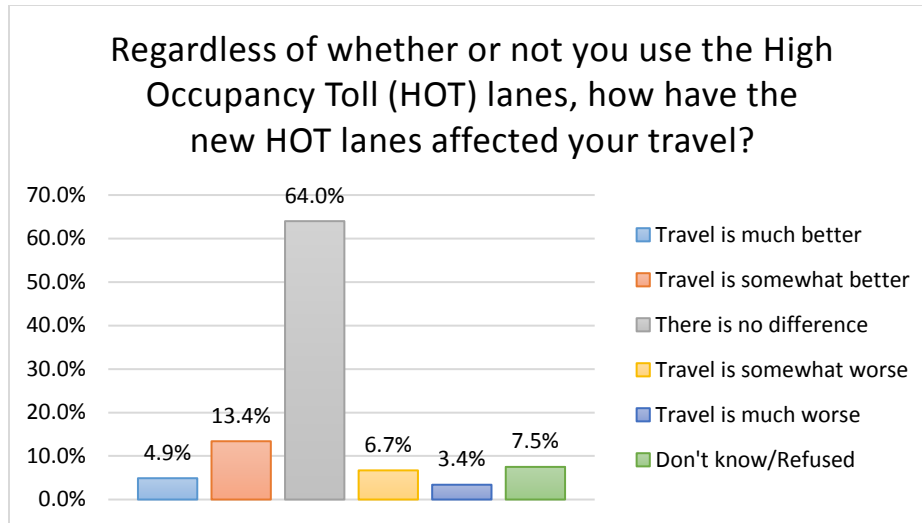
This year's LIHR survey remained consistent with a relatively small percentage of respondents not wanting the light rail expanded at only 12.1 percent. However, there is a reduction when it comes to wanting to see light rail expanded to certain cities and locations. Over 50% of respondents want the light rail expanded to Virginia Beach Oceanfront (55.0%). Additionally, 41.2 percent of respondents would like to see the light rail expanded to Virginia Beach Town Center, 40.6 percent to the Naval Base, and 39.9 percent to Norfolk International Airport. More than 30% of respondents want the light rail expanded to Hampton (34.8%), Chesapeake (33.6%), Newport News (33.2%), and Portsmouth (30.7%). Only 22.7 percent wished to see the light rail expanded to Suffolk.



The section of highway on I-64 between the I-264 Interchange and I-564 in Norfolk was previously a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane. That section is now a tolled I-64 Express Lane segment, also called a high occupancy toll (HOT) lane. Subsequently, this year's LIHR survey aimed to learn how often Hampton Roads residents were using the new HOT lanes and how they thought the HOT lanes affected their travel. The majority of respondents said they never use the new HOT lanes (67.6%). About fifteen percent (15.1%) use the new HOT lanes about once a month. Another 10.2 percent use the HOT lanes several times per month. Only 2.7 percent use the HOT lanes several times per week and 2.4 percent use the HOT lanes about once a day. Only 2.7 percent use the HOT lanes several times per week and 2.4 percent use the HOT lanes about once a day. 1.9 percent use the HOT lanes about once a day.



Regardless of whether the respondents said they use the HOT lanes or not, they were then asked how the HOT lanes have affected their travel. The majority of respondents (64.0%) said they saw no difference in their travel since the HOT lanes were opened. Additionally, 13.4 percent said travel is somewhat better since the HOT lanes opened and 4.9 percent said travel is much better. Another 6.7 percent said that travel is somewhat worse and 3.4 percent said travel is much worse since the HOT lanes were opened.



All Life in Hampton Roads Data Analyses will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (<http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>). Follow-up questions about the 2018 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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